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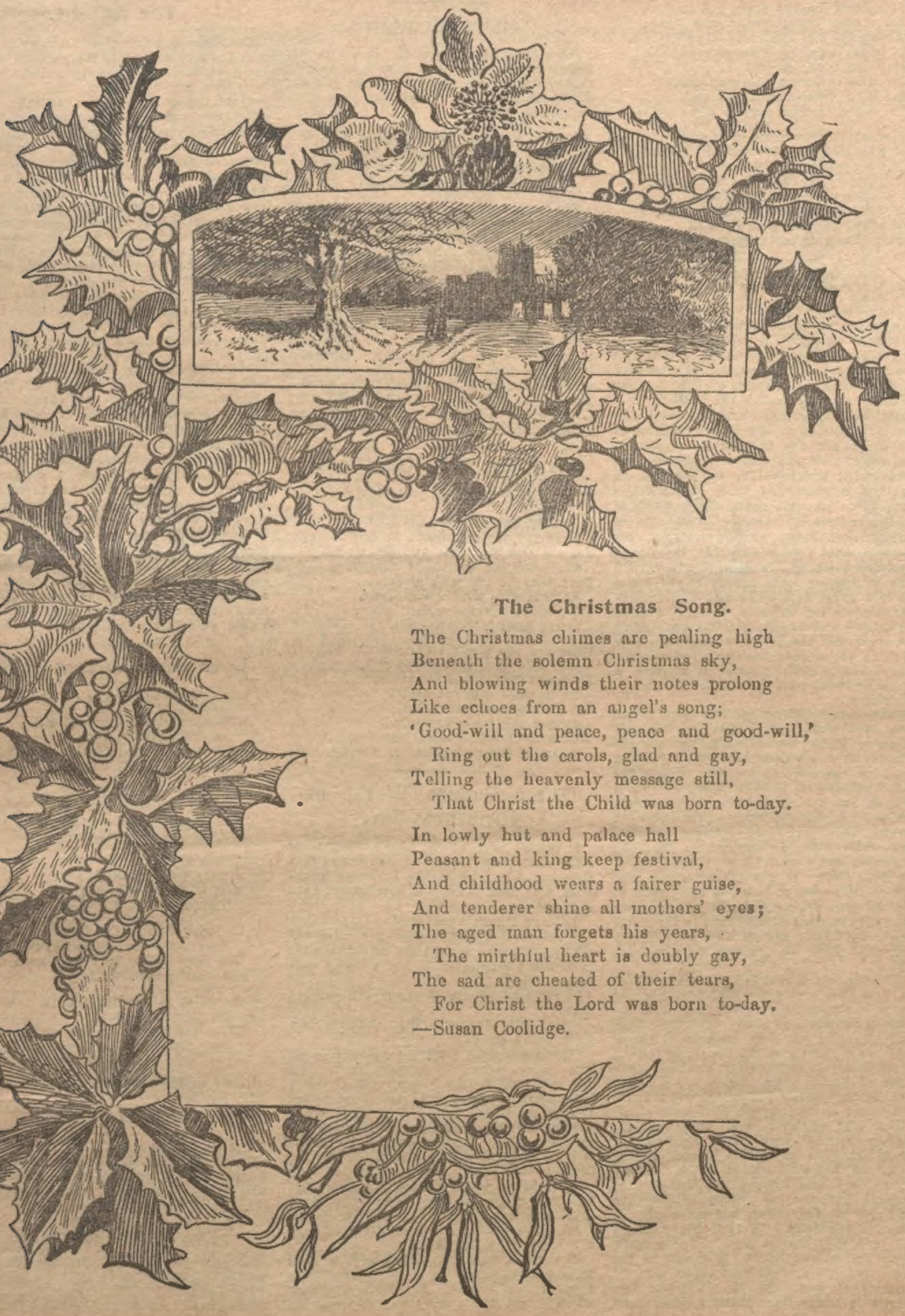

The Christmas Song.

The Christmas chimes are pealing high
Beneath the solemn Christmas sky,
And blowing winds their notes prolong
Like echoes from an angel's song;
'Good-will and peace, peace and good-will,'
  Ring out the carols, glad and gay,
Telling the heavenly message still,
  That Christ the Child was born to-day.

In lowly hut and palace hall
Peasant and king keep festival,
And childhood wears a fairer guise,
And tenderer shine all mothers' eyes;
The aged man forgets his years,
  The mirthful heart is doubly gay,
The sad are cheated of their tears,
  For Christ the Lord was born to-day.

—Susan Coolidge.

Peace on Earth.

(James Russell Lowell.)

'What means this glory round our feet,'
  The Magi mused, 'more bright than morn?'
And voices chanted clear and sweet,
  'To-day the Prince of Peace is born!'
'What means this star,' the shepherds said,
  'That brightens through the rocky glen?'
And angels answering, overhead,
  Sang, 'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

'Tis eighteen hundred years, and more,
  Since those sweet oracles were dumb;
We wait for him like them of yore;
  Alas! he seems so slow to come!
But it was said, in words of gold
  No time or sorrow e'er shall dim,
That little children might be bold
  In perfect trust to come to him.

All round about our feet shall shine
  A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving wills incline
  To that sweet life which is the law.
So shall we learn to understand
  The simple faith of shepherds then,
And kindly clasping hand in hand,
  Sing, 'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

Christmas Day.

The birthday of Jesus Christ is the culminating epoch of Christian benevolence. While in some of its aspects it shows human selfishness and a perfunctory exchange of sentiment and accompanying gifts, yet for the most part, it is as sincere and truthful a giving festival as there is in the world. The poor, the destitute, the sad, sick, and suffering children of men have learned to look upon Christmas as the one bright day in their dark calendar, and, out of their very darkness and trial, have tried to lift themselves by its help into a transient sunshine and hope. Toward this festival, the thoughts and kindly purposes of multitudes have been tending all through the year. Patient fingers have wrought, in the moments saved from a busy life, the gift of affection, which on Christmas day shall tell anew of undying love; and sweet self-denial has laid aside, during the slow-moving seasons, the offering which is to make another comfortable and happy. Parents have toiled and saved that the little Christmas tree may stand in the humble tenement, and children have joined in secret alliance to surprise a mother or father with their childish but heartfelt offering.

While commercialism and the spirit which turns even poetry and religion into channels for money-getting have invaded Christmas and degraded it with a tinsel show and a jewelled formalism, its root lies too deep in both the divine and human, to be withered by such a drought, and its real fruitage is too beneficent to be blighted by avarice and selfishness. Besides, there is one human element in Christmas which aids in keeping its character wholesome and sincere. It is the festival of the little child. It was an infant who was born in Bethlehem of Judea, to bring glory to God and good will to men, and in the sincere and guileless spirit of childhood, in the trusting, loving, hearty and unselfish spirit of the holy child Jesus we celebrate the Christmas day.

Who does not delight in the innocent joy of the little ones around the Christmas tree and sympathise with the gladness which finds expression in song and selfish festivity? Were there no other end than to make childhood happy once every year the Christmas festival would be worth perpetuating, and more than repay all that it costs. But it has a higher meaning than simple pleasure-giving, and this will insure its continuance.

This day, whatever may betide us, the children shall be happy. They shall hear of the infant Jesus and of his blessed gifts to them, and they shall receive, in the countless forms which love devises, manifestations of parental, brotherly, and sisterly affection, the good will of companions, and the result of Christian friendship. In their happy homes and from their dearest ones, and in schools, where the love of Christ is taught as the source and spring of all good action, will the children hail and enjoy the Christmas day, because it brings them gladness, good cheer, and gifts; while many a waif and orphan will forget for the time his bitter lot and share the gladness which Christ meant that all should participate.

In the midst of our receiving and giving, there is one Christmas gift which we can all bestow, a gift that love alone can offer and gratitude constrain us to give, to the Babe of Bethlehem, to the Man Christ Jesus, to our Lord and God. We may all give ourselves to Jesus as a Christmas gift.—New York 'Observer.'

Tender Memories.

Blessed Christmas season! It makes our hearts tender when we look at book or gift, faded, perhaps, but treasured in the calendar of the heart, and not to be looked upon without bitter tears.

'There's many a lad I loved is gone,
  And many a lass grown old;
And when, at times, I think thereon,
  My weary heart grows cold.'

The very thought of these departed friends makes us better, and so Christmas can not help but be a happy time for us. They seem to come to us from their warm beds under the snow to give us greeting. This is true also of such as are not bound to us by the ties of blood or love. It is so with all the weary and vexed men and women who have passed away. The singers, the thinkers, and the workers who are under the sod, they come to us. They are not forgotten. All whose lives have been noble, and who have done much for the world, we think of them at this season. We think of the Christ, too, who died for man and hath left us this day to draw us nearer to him.—Selected.

A Christmas Question.

(Annie L. Jack.)

What can you give for Christmas?
  It is not the gift that's brought,
But the love that goes with the giving,
  The faith and the happy thought
That fills the life with gladness
  And the eyes with unshed tears,
That will warm the coldest winter
  Of the heart in future years.

What can you give for Christmas?
  Just hold your tired hands still,
For a gift that is hard of earning
  Its message does not fulfill.
But a simple memory token
  Of love you can always send;
That will breathe a silent greeting
  From the heart of friend to friend.

Three Dollars Worth of Christmas Joy.

It doesn't take a long bank account to make some people happy. I met a man in a store one day down in the Tennessee mountains, who came to me with outstretched hand and said—

'Howdy? I don't know you.'

'I am ——,' I said, giving my name and taking his hand. I could see he didn't want to borrow a quarter for he had a happy, contented look.

'What kind of the Crissmus did you-uns have?'

'Very good,' I said. 'The children were made happy anyway.'

'That's jest what I did,' he replied, and his face beamed with the memory of it. 'I'll tell you what I did. I went and cut me a little hemlock and set it up at home. Then I went round and borrowed about a dozen children that I knowed wa'nt goin' to have no Crissmus doin's. I spent egzackly three dollars on the hull shootin' match. They had heaps of fun, a little trifiin' present and some candy. Why, mister, three dollars wouldn't hardly paid for the foundation rocks of a Crissmus drunk, let alone the soberin' up, an' I got a powerful lot o' fun out'n hit, an' nary a hair pullin' nex' mornin'.

'I wouldn't trade this Crissmus with them there children for all the mountain-dew Crissmuseses I ever seed. I've been studdyin' about it, and hits a eorry way to spend His birthday to git no count drunk, but them younguns—wall, I reckin they wouldn't ben no happier if I'd a given each one of them a nottermobile like Tom was readin' about.

'An' the old women she was that happy she cried, though for that, she's done cried other times when she wa'nt happy. Mister, there's no 'countin' for wimmin's tears. They've got happy tears an' sorry tears right out o' the same eyes, but I'd a heap ruther seen the happy, smily kind.'—'Congregational Work.'

The Advent.

Christmas is a day of peculiar joy to those who know by experience the profound significance of the angel's message: 'Unto you is born this day a Saviour.' The tidings of joy are tidings of salvation, and the pledge that every penitent and believing soul shall be consciously saved from sin, and receive 'the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.' Little do they understand the story of Christ's birth who have no experience of his saving power and presence in them. It is a story told to the ear which finds no response in the heart. But how divinely precious is the meaning of Christmas to the heart in which Christ has been born the hope of glory! The blessedness of that experience can never be fully told. It is the blessedness of being a new creature in Christ Jesus, of beginning to live as he lived, or being transformed into his likeness, and prepared to share his eternal glory.

The Lord's coming in the body would be really nothing to us if it were not the medium through which he could forever after come to believing souls. He came by way of the manger and the cross that he might gain access to human hearts. He says: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.' If we have not heeded his voice and opened the door, we know not the real meaning of Christmas. We may join in the outward festivities of the day, but are ignorant of its deepest joy. But if we have opened the door and received the Saviour as our guest, what a glorious festival we are enjoying! 'His presence disperses our gloom, and makes all within us rejoice.'—'Presbyterian Banner.'

Love the Shortest Route.

Angelus Silesius (1624).

Though Christ a thousand times
  In Bethlehem be born,
If he's not born in thee,
  Thy soul is still forlorn.

The cross on Golgotha
  Will never save thy soul;
The cross in thine own heart
  Alone can make thee whole.

Whate'er thou lovest, man,
  That too, become thou must;
God, if thou lovest God,
  Dust, if thou lovest dust.

To bring thee to thy God,
  Love takes the shortest route;
The way which knowledge leads
  Is but a round-about.

A heaven within thyself
  In calm eternity.
Drive out from thee the world,
  And then like God thou'lt be.

Acknowledgments.

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The Postal Crusade.

In your planning for Christmas gifts remember the papers which carry the tidings of 'Peace and Good Will' to hearts in India. Many subscriptions run out on December 31st.

IN LITTLE BETHLEHEM.

(Mary W. Brownson, in the 'Presbyterian Banner.')

'Asabel,' said little Bani, wonderingly, 'why is it that so many people come to Bethlehem upon these days? The streets are never clear of caravans, strangers stand at every turning and the houses are full of guests. To-day thy mother, as she directed her maids, spake of seven kinsmen who will come to her household.'

'O Bani,' cried his boyish companion throwing himself down upon the grassy slopes near the well. 'A numbering of the people hath been ordered,' his friend replied, with conscious superiority, 'and every man goeth to his own city to have his name inscribed upon the rolls. I did hear Sadoc, the ruler of our synagogue, declare this but yesterday.'

'Who hath ordered it?' persisted Bani, with eager curiosity.

'Oh, as to that I cannot tell thee,' Asabel continued carelessly. 'Methinks it was the king, although Sadoc said that there were those who thought it wrong and contrary to the laws of Moses.'

'And must we do wrong at the bidding of the king?' queried Bani, open-eyed.

'It may not be wrong; I do not know,' returned Asabel. 'But we must obey the king until Messiah cometh. Then we shall be free and rich and powerful as were our people in the days of David.'

Bani's eyes shone with excitement. 'Oh, I know that Messiah cometh,' he cried. 'I do hear my father talk much of him Would that he might come to-day! Thinkest thou, Asabel, that he might be amid the throng?'

'Bani, Bani!' thou art but a child and understandest not thine own words,' said his companion, reprovingly. 'No one doth know when the Messiah shall come; no one doth dare to say how he shall appear unto us. He is to be a Son of David and from Bethlehem; but my father saith that some believe he shall suddenly appear at Jerusalem, and none shall know of him beforehand. Perchance he will ride into the city with the train of a king, while the singers chant his praises and the people shout for joy.'

Little Bani lay back upon the slope beside his friend and looked up at the sky. 'Oh, that I might be at the gate when he entereth in!' he said. 'Would he regard a child like me, or would he be too great a king to notice one so small?'

'He would regard neither me nor thee,' answered Asabel, with decision. 'He would have eyes only for the priests and rulers. Is he not to be our Prince? But, behold, Bani! Yonder come two strangers who turn their beasts toward the well. Be silent and we shall hear what they say to each other.'

The travellers rode up to the well and dismounted to partake of the water. They looked about them in silence for a moment; then the elder man spoke, pointing across the valley to the terraced hill upon which the little town was built. 'Is it not truly called the "House of Bread?" The vineyards on the hillsides and the cornfields below insure a bountiful provision for the dwellers therein; and the pastures which lie beyond the city afford rich supply for the flocks.'

'Yea, it hath been the home of plenty since the time of David,' said his companion. 'How dear it was to his heart!'

The elder traveller stooped to drink once more of the well of David ere he made reply. 'Verily,' he said, 'I do remember; and like him I have said: "Oh, that one would give me water of the well of Bethlehem!"'

'Mine eyes had never rested upon the royal city before this day,' continued Melchi, 'yet do I also love the inheritance of my fathers, even as thou dost who hast dwelt here in days past.' 'Is it in the field on this eastern side that the Temple flocks are kept?'

'Yea,' answered Jonan; 'seest thou not the Tower of the Flock standing yonder?'

Melchi turned to gaze in the direction pointed out to him, and stood so for a moment without speaking. Then he quoted in a tone of deep feeling,—"And thou, O Tower of the Flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee it shall come, yea the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem!" Jonan, doth not the prophet mean that to Bethlehem shall come the announcement of the Messiah?'

'Verily it doth seem so,' commented his friend, reverently. 'Consider thou also this: "Out of thee shall come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel. Shall not the prince of David's line come to his own city?'

'Jonan,' cried Melchi, suddenly, 'is it not a marvel that the line of David is now gathered into Bethlehem as it hath never been heretofore? From all Judea and beyond Jordan and from far-off Galilee do the members of the royal house assemble that they may enroll themselves. What if the coming of the Deliverer were at hand?'

'The thought has come also to me, Melchi,' replied Jonan, a look of glowing expectation passing over his face. Then as it faded he added soberly, 'Yet do I see no sign of his coming. And, truly, how could he come to a people so unprepared to receive him?'

'Nay, it is not the nation which hath turned aside from the way of Jehovah, but the rulers who have led the people astray,' broke in Melchi, impulsively. But here the sudden uplifting of his companion's hand checked his frank expression of opinion; and following the direction of Jonan's pointing finger his

eyes beheld the two eager little listeners. He looked at them soberly for a moment, and then his face relaxed into a smile.

'"In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression, But he that refraineth his lips doeth wisely."' he quoted. 'Come hither, my lads. Can ye conduct me to the house of Eliel?'

The boys leaped from their resting-place. 'Yea, verily,' cried Asabel; 'it is the home of my father. Art thou one of our kinsmen?'

'I am,' returned Melchi, kindly, 'and this is Jonan, thine uncle, with me. We are glad to own so goodly a lad as thou art. Thou wilt not rebel, Jonan, if thou art so escorted, though thou knowest the way. Behold the boy; hath he not the making of a proper man in him? But what of this little one beside thee, my son? Is he thy brother?'

'Nay,' Asabel made answer; 'he is the son of Micha the shepherd, who doth tend the Temple flocks. His mother was of our family, and since her death, Bani hath been much with our household, and somewhat under my mother's care.'

'I pray thee,' said Bani, timidly, as he ran beside the stranger, 'forgive me, my lord, for troubling thee with my requests. But I did hear thee speak earnestly of the Messiah, and I do so desire to learn of him. Will he of a truth come to Bethlehem at this time?'

Jonan regarded him gravely. 'Thou didst hear me say that I know not with certainty the time of his coming, nor did our scribes know?'

'Yea,' faltered the boy, in a tone of disappointment. 'Yet I did hear in thy voice that thou didst wish for his coming; and I thought that thou mightest have reason to hope though thou didst not know.'

Jonan's eyes gleamed with sudden lustre, and a smile stole over his face. He stood still in the road and put his hand upon the child's shoulder. 'Thou readest the thoughts of my heart, little Bani. Verily I do hope, though I know not,' he said, softly. 'The Deliverer will come to Zion at the appointed time; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And I believe that our eyes, even ours, shall behold him!'

Abiah, the wife of Eliel, received her guests at the threshold of her house with true Jewish hospitality. Jonan was her brother-in-law, and he had once resided in Bethlehem. Melchi, a distant cousin, was no less welcome, though hitherto a stranger to them. As she bustled about, ministering to the comfort of the travellers, she talked volubly of the excitement prevailing in the little town by reason of the sudden influx of the members of the great family of David.

'Every house is filled,' she said.' 'Azabah, my neighbor, hath been forced to send away all her sons to booths upon the hillside that she may have beds sufficient for her guests. I, myself,' she continued with visible pride, 'have no need to resort to such extremities. My house is spacious, and I have room for those who come to me.'

'Hath the town accommodations for all who will come?' asked Melchi.

A shade of perplexity, of vexation, crossed the brow of Abiah. 'I fear not,' she answered. 'For those who come late or for those who have not friends to offer them a shelter, I fear there is now no room. But an hour since I had application from two Galileans, who besought me to admit them. But I could not. Unless I brought discomfort upon those already in my charge I could take no one else.'

'It is hard to travel so great a distance and then find no room in one's own city,' said Jonan gently.

The shadow deepened upon Abiah's face. 'But these would find it in the khan, I doubt not,' she rejoined with haste. 'I told them how to reach it and the khan is large. Doubtless, they found entrance there. I have done my utmost for my own; how can I do more? Surely the khan would take them in!'

But in spite of her protestations Abiah was unsatisfied. Regret had seized upon her after the strangers had turned wearily from her door, and now she strove in vain to persuade herself that they would easily find comfortable quarters in the khan and that no obligation rested on her to provide for them.

'Bani,' she said presently to the small shepherd lad, 'speed thou to the khan and ask if two Galileans are lodged there, who did enter Bethlehem ere the close of day. They are there, of course; they must be there. I would fain know that they are cared for as they should be.'

Bani sped away through narrow lanes to the centre of the town, where the khan stood on the edge of the open space reserved for the marketing of produce. The scene in front of the long low building was now unusually animated. Bani pushed his way through the assembly with childish persistence, watching his chance to dart round a group seated upon the ground, or under the outstretched arm of some animated talker. At last a detaining hand was laid upon him, and a voice called his name.

'Bani, the son of Micha! What doest thou here?'

The boy looked up with a little cry. 'Josiah! I do seek thee. Abiah, the wife of Eliel, hath sent me to thee to learn whether thou hast received two Galilean strangers who came into Bethlehem this day.'

Josiah spread his hands with a gesture of good-humored despair. 'What sayest thou, lad—two Galilean strangers? I have a score! Look about thee and see the multitudes that throng the building and fill my courts with wares of every kind. Wherefore doth the wife of Eliel ask such a question of me?'

'But there were two who "lately came," persisted Bani. 'They did speak with Abiah, but she could not take them in. They were man and wife, she bade me say to thee, and they had come from Nazareth.'

The host turned with sudden interest. 'A young wife was she, lad, with a face before which one bowed his head and knew not wherefore he had done so?'

'I think it,' Bani assented, eagerly, 'though I have not seen her. Abiah did bid me tell thee that having looked upon her face thou couldst not forget it afterwards.'

'Verily it is the same,' Josiah said. 'They came to me and I had no room for them. The man did beseech me earnestly, saying that his wife was far from well and that they had sought in vain for shelter. I was loth to say them nay, and yet I had no room in which to set them down. But when I went near to the beast whereon the woman sat, meaning to make excuse to her, I saw her countenance more clearly, and the words which I had meant to utter were forgotten. Say to Abiah that I was moved to take the strangers in, although the khan offered no place for them; and they are now within the cave hard by, wherein our beasts find shelter.'

The boy nodded. 'I will speak thy words, Josiah, even as thou dost give them unto me. Abiah will rejoice to know the Galileans have found a resting-place.'

In the solemn midnight watches, little Bani awoke suddenly from his dreamless slumber upon the housetop, where he and Asabel, warmly covered from the air, were spending the night under the protection of some of the men servants of the household. The child lay for a little while, looking up at the still clear sky, with the stars set in it like glowing lamps; and a new sense of the nearness and protecting power of the Lord Jehovah stole into his heart. Presently he raised himself upon his elbow that he might look out over the town to the slopes below, where his father was watching the sacrificial lambs; and he wondered whether Micha also felt safe and peaceful because the Keeper of Israel neither slumbered nor slept. As he gazed, a change came over the quiet scene. He saw a sudden glory in the sky, a brightness which flowed and deepened in intensity until it streamed upward to the very highest point of heaven. Then something like a falling star descended swiftly through the shining sky until it stood over the field of the shepherds.

Bani waited no longer. He shook his cousin gently, whispering in his ear, 'Wake Asabel!

BETHLEHEM ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Rouse thee from sleep. The heavens glow with fire, and surely something marvellous doth happen.' Then as the boy stirred and murmured in his waking, Bani mingled warnings with his entreaties. 'Have thou care, O Asabel. Wake not the servants, I beseech thee! Come, let us go to my father; he will show unto us the meaning of the marvel.'

When fully conscious of his surroundings, Asabel was as eager to understand the wonder as Bani could possibly be. The two little figures stole rapidly down the outer stairway and fled along the silent streets. Reaching the summit of the hillside they looked out once more upon the wider view.

The splendor had deepened into something indescribable in the eastern quarter of the sky. And now a multitude of moving objects, dazzling in their brightness, passed swiftly down that path of heavenly glory and paused above the Temple pasture land. As the children looked up with reverent faces, there came a burst of distant music in the air, as though a chorus of singers was voicing from the far-off azure strains of immortal praise. So soft and sweet it was, so unlike earthly music, that the tender childish hearts were filled with ecstacy, and their eyes brimmed over with sudden tears. Not till the last faint note had died away did they move; then Bani cried imploringly to his friend, 'O Asabel, it is the Messiah! Let us hasten to him!'

With flying feet they trod the rough road descending to the fields, then fell into a slower pace, for the light was fading rapidly and it was hard to see. Breathlessly they urged each other on, a great fear rising in their minds that they should miss the meeting with the Son of David. At last Bani stumbled and fell, bruising himself severely; and then a panic seized him. He burst into a flood of tears, crying, 'O Asabel, I fear, I fear! We shall never find him, and it is so dark!'

The elder boy strove to raise his comrade, calling out encouraging words. 'Bani, Bani, there is nought to fear. No man is near us, and see how silent is the night. Come, let us hasten onward; is not thy father near at hand?' But Bani only laid his head upon his arm and sobbed on, 'It is so dark, and I am sore afraid!'

By and by the sound of hurried footsteps became clearly distinguishable, and Asabel, whose courage had been sorely tried by Bani's giving way to terror, sprang up with a quick cry of relief. For he heard also familiar voices, and he knew that they who were approaching were shepherds of the Temple flock. A moment later Micha lifted his little son into his arms, and the boy, still sobbing, put his head down upon the strong shoulder which supported him and lost his fears.

'What seeketh my child upon the hillside in the darkness of night?' said Micha tenderly. 'Verily thou art a lost lamb, Bani! It is well for thee that the shepherd came this way.'

'I seek, O my father, I seek the Messiah! From the housetop of Abiah we saw the glory and we heard the wondrous music; and we thought he had surely come. So we stole down the stair and ran swiftly through the town to meet him. But the singing ceased, and the light faded from the sky; and then great fear overcame us, and I knew that I was only a little child, out on the hills alone in the blackness of night.'

Micha clasped his boy still more closely. 'But the shepherd hath found the straying lamb, my Bani, and the father his son. Fear thou not.' Then he turned to his companions to say, 'Let us hasten, friends, upon our joyful errand; for time speedeth swiftly.'

As they hurried up the hill, Micha, holding Bani in his arms while Asabel ran by his side, the shepherds spoke again. 'Hearken my little ones, as I tell you the story of what I have seen this night. Ye did see the glory in the sky, though not so wondrously as did we; for it streamed all about us as we lay in the field with our flocks. Ye did hear the singing, but your ears could not catch the words which told us of the love of the Lord Jehovah for men. And ye did not know that angels from the highest heaven were the singers. They floated in the air above us, the radiance of the shining light falling upon their white garments, and our hearts melted in us for wonder and awe. One of them, the first to come, spake to us a message from the Lord. Listen Asabel and Little Bani: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." And when he had finished, the multitude of the heavenly host burst into praises, singing, "Glory to God!"'

'Born this day? in the city of David?' asked Bani, suddenly raising his head. 'Why, my father, he will be a babe and not a man!'

'Yea, my son,' answered the shepherd, 'he is born this day, a babe. We are even now in search for him, and the angel told us as a sign by which to know him, that we should find him lying in a manger.'

The boy cried out in great delight. 'O my father! I can take thee to him. Surely I know where he may be found!'

Micha stood still in sheer surprise. 'Thou knowest, child? Thou art dreaming. How couldst thou know?'

'Yea, I know, I know,' called Bani, exulting; 'do I not, Asabel? There are two Galileans at the khan, who are so noble in their bearing that all who see do feel deep reverence for them. There was no room in the khan, yet could not Josiah send them away; and he gave them lodging in the cave. Surely they must be the parents of the babe!'

'Son, it may be that thou hast found him for us,' said Micha, greatly wondering. He called hastily to his friend and told them the story related by the children. Then they all set forward with redoubled speed.

The lamp burning before the doorway marked the khan now crowded with sleepers. Walking cautiously around it, the little group of shepherds approached the opening of the cave where another light burned low. And here they met a tall, quiet man of more than middle age, to whom they told their errand.

It was a grave face into which the eager shepherds looked. It was marked by many lines of care and anxious thought, but it wore also an expression of mingled strength and sweetness which was wondrously attractive. At the close of the recital he said simply: 'It is even as the Lord Jehovah hath revealed it unto you by the messengers from heaven. The babe is here; and ye may now behold him.' Then turning he led the way into the humble cavern which had become the dwelling of the Son of God.

Upon a heap of pillows placed on the raised portion of the farther wall reclined Mary the Nazarene. The look upon her face expressed more than the first rapture of motherhood, marvellous as this is to those who see it. She was the guardian of a secret beyond her power of understanding, which lifted her above the level of daily human life and into the atmosphere of heavenly things. Closely folded in her arms was a little sleeping babe, whose head rested upon her breast, and she looked down upon him with her whole soul in her eyes, so that she scarcely knew what took place about her.

The shepherds fell reverently upon their knees and gazed in silence at the slumbering child. Asabel and little Bani crept nearer, until they were close beside the couch; and the eyes of Mary the mother suddenly beheld them, while her face grew luminous with a tender smile. From a far-off distance, somewhere, came the faint sweet echo of music, as though the chorus of the angels were still sounding in the sky. And as the glory shone yonder in the highest heaven, so the peace of God brooded over the little cavern in the hillside at ancient Bethlehem.

Christmas Lesson.

(Emilie Poulsson.)

Again the loved old stories
We read at Christmastide,
Oh! may their blessed lessons
Deep in our hearts abide.

Be ours the choice to follow
A heav'n enkindled star,
E'en though its rays point forward
Through lonely ways and far.

Aid like the simple shepherds,
As swift and glad as they,
May we our heavenly visions
In joyful awe obey.

The inn was all too crowded—
Oh! may we heed this sign
And in our hearts keep ever
A place for the Divine.

Little Dan's Christmas.

(Ernest Gilmore, in the 'Christian Intelligencer.')

Little Dan was the smallest newsboy on the street. Such a little fellow to be peddling papers! But he had the grit to do it.

'I can paddle my own canoe,' he said, to himself, bravely swallowing a troublesome lump that threatened to choke him. 'Dad said I'd have to, an' I can.'

Poor little Dan! My heart goes out to him. His mother was dead and his ne'er-do-well father had forsaken him.

And Dan was only ten years old. If he had been born under happier circumstances he would have been considered a handsome boy. While Dan's father was with him he was accustomed to abusive words, and blows, to hunger and cold, and neglect. But now it was not so hard. He shared an attic room with several other newsboys. His bed was an old mattress on the floor with only a single covering, an old comforter, and no pillow. He went to bed early to keep warm. He was up early out in the cold after the morning papers. He did his best, but he was always hungry and tired. One stormy November day, just after he had sold his last paper and had started for 'Old Ma'am Rose's' shop for a 'bit of lunch,' something happened. A nurse, pushing a baby carriage across the street, became confused in the noise and left her charge, a beautiful smiling baby girl, to the mercy of the approaching trolley. Dan saw the whole thing, the trolley on one side, the prancing horses on the other, the baby in her perilous position, and then—and then—I do not know how it was done, but there he was right in it. He was just in time. Something surpassingly sweet and clear rang in his soul, making him glad, for he had pushed the smiling baby in her carriage out of danger. Then, suddenly, following the gladness, came a great pain, ending in darkness. When he aroused from that darkness he was in a white bed, and there was a sweet-faced, white-capped nurse near by.

'How'd I get here? An' where be I?' he asked wonderingly.

'You're in the hospital. They brought you here in an ambulance. You got hurt saving Mrs. Swift's baby.'

A light came into Dan's eyes.

'Oh,' he cried, 'I'm glad I saved the baby. I was afraid mebbe I couldn't. She's got a mother, hasn't she?'

'Yes,' the nurse said, 'a lovely one.'

The light deepened in Dan's eyes.

'Then she's glad, too. She'd felt awful if the baby'd been killed. She wasn't even hurt—was she?'

'No, she wasn't hurt the least bit. I'm sorry you were hurt.'

'Somebody had to be, an' it's lucky 'twas me. I ain't got no mother to feel bad about me, an' if dad knew I was hurt he wouldn't care. I don't care—myself—only—only——'

A spasm of pain made him gasp for breath. Then, suddenly, with a great effort, he finished his sentence, 'Only it must be nice to hev a mother to care.'

The nurse did not answer, she could not just then.

'What's the matter with my legs?' the boy asked, 'I can't move 'em.'

'They're broken, but they'll be all right after a few weeks. You'll have to just stay here and be as patient as you can until you get well.'

The light came into his eyes again.

'It's nice here,' he said, 'I'd like to stay if I'm not too much trouble. I've never been in such a white, white place before, an' it's so clean!'

'Don't talk any more just now,' the nurse said, gently.

When he awoke again a beautiful young woman was sitting beside him. A great bouquet of red carnations on a small stand near his bedside breathed their fragrance over him. Dan looked at the visitor questioningly, and she—in answer—stooped and kissed his forehead.

'I'm the baby's mother, little Dan,' she said, gently stroking the thin hand that rested on the white spread.

'Oh,' he cried out, 'Oh!' his face becoming radiant.

'How glad she must be!' was his thought. 'She kissed me, oh, oh, she kissed me.'

It was the first kiss in his remembrance—the first kiss.

'You dear boy! (It was the baby's mother talking). You little hero! It makes my heart ache to know that you got hurt saving my baby.'

'It's all right, ma'am, don't you fret. You see I ain't got any folks to feel bad, I'm just Dan.'

He was trying his best to comfort her, but her only answer were the tears that rained down her face.

* * * *

Christmas, glad Christmas, had come. Dan had not walked yet, but the doctor at the hospital had assured him that 'he would soon be running around as well as ever.' He sat on a great cushioned chair—with his legs on a padded stool—in Mrs. Swift's parlor. The lovely baby that he had saved was toddling about the room, approaching him now and then with a smiling gurgle of delight, holding up her new Christmas dolly for his admiration. Sometimes she would shyly reach up one of her tiny dimpled hands and stroke his thin ones gently. He had never loved any one else as he loved this beautiful baby, and he had saved her. And there never had been any one else as pretty as she was—he thought—unless it was her mother.

'Little Dan,' she had said, that morning, 'how would you like me for a Christmas gift?'

'You?' he had questioned, wonderingly.

'Yes,' she said, with her loving smile, 'if it had not been for you I would have been childless this Christmas day, and so I think I ought not to be motherless. I will be a mother to you if you will have me, little Dan.'

She put her arms around him and drew him close to her. All that he could say at that wonderful moment was, 'Oh! Oh' but the glow that had come into his soul had come to stay. Ah, what a gulf lay between to-day and the old days in the attic. Rest and love had transformed the little face, which was fair and clean now. His gifts were many and lay all about him, on his lap and on the table beside him. Caesar, an old colored servant, suddenly appeared on the scene.

'De Christmas dinner am served,' he said with a broad grin.

Dan took a long breath of delight. 'Oh!' he said, 'Oh!'

The delicious aroma from roast turkey was wafted to him. Caesar was carrying him gently into the dining-room. He folded his hands when the blessing was asked. He said his own silently, his face aglow.

'You are so good, dear God,' he said to himself, 'an' I'm so awful happy.'

The Christmas Stocking.

'Long ago—so very long ago it seems to me now—when I was a very little boy not out of petticoats, my father brought home a book,' writes Mr. W. T. Stead, in the preface to this edition of the 'Christmas Stocking.' 'It was only a little book, but that little book has helped to make me happier every Christmas for forty years. For it was the reading of that story in our house which began, for us in the old home, the practice of hanging up Christmas Stockings. Although the bairns of to-day may think that there never was a time when Santa Claus did not fill the Christmas Stocking, yet there are many men and women now living who, when they were little children, knew nothing of Christmas Stockings, even when they kept Christmas with plum pudding, roast beef, and Christmas boxes. I wish even now I could believe that there would be no boy or girl in the whole world who would not find their Christmas Stocking full this Christmas day in the morning. It is rather a sad little story, in some ways, but it is none the worse for that, if it should make you, when you read it, think a little of poor little boys like Norman Finch, who are weak and ill and do not always get enough to eat. The best Christmas Stocking which any one of us can get is the habit of always remembering some one who has not all the good things which we possess.'

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING.

By Elizabeth Wetherell, (author of 'The Wide, Wide World.')

'Wife,' said John Krinken, 'what shall we put in little Carl's stocking to-night?'

'Truly,' said his wife, 'I do not know. Nevertheless we must find something, though there be but little in the house.'

And the wind swept round and round the old hut, and every cupboard door rattled and said in an empty sort of way, 'There is not much here.'

John Krinken and his wife lived on the coast, where they could hear every winter storm rage and beat, and where the wild sea sometimes brought wood for them and laid it at their very door. It was a drift-wood fire by which they sat now, this Christmas Eve. The andirons were two round stones, and the hearth was a flat one; and in front of the fire sat John Krinken on an old box making a fish-net, while a splinter chair upheld Mrs. Krinken and a half-mended red flannel shirt. An old chest between the two held patches and balls of twine.

'We must find something,' repeated John. And pausing with his netting-needle half through the loop, he looked round towards one corner of the hut.

A clean rosy little face and a very complete set of thick curls rested there, in the very middle of the thin pillow and the hard bed; while the coverlet of blue check was tucked round and in, lest the drift-wood fire should not do its duty at that distance.

'You've got the stocking, wife?' said John, after a pause.

'Ay,' said his wife, 'it's easy to find something to fill it.'

'Fetch it out, then, and let's see how much it will take.'

Mrs. Krinken arose, and, going to one of the two little cupboards, she brought thence a large iron key; and then having placed the patches and thread upon the floor, she opened the chest, and rummaged out a long grey woollen stocking, with white toe and heel and various darns in red. Then she locked the chest again and sat down as before.

'The same old thing,' said John Krinken, with a glance at the stocking.

'Well,' said his wife, 'it's the only stocking in the house that's long enough.'

'I know one thing he shall have in it,' said John; and he got up and went to the other cupboard, and fetched from it a large piece of cork.

'He shall have a boat that will float like one of Mother Carey's chickens.' And he began to cut and shape with his large clasp-knife, while the little heap of chips on the floor between his feet grew larger, and the cork grew more and more like a boat.

His wife laid down her hand, which was in the sleeve of the red jacket, and watched him.

'It'll never do to put that in first,' she said; 'the masts will be broken. I guess I'll fill the toe of the stocking with apples.'

'Apples!' said John. 'Well, I'll give him a farthing to fill up the chinks.'

'And I've an old purse that he can keep it in,' said the mother.

'How long do you suppose he'll keep it?' said John.

'Well, he'll want to put it somewhere while he does keep it,' said Mrs. Krinken. 'The purse is old, but it was handsome once; and it'll please the child, anyway. And then there's his new shoes.'

So when the boat was done, Mrs. Krinken brought out the apples and slipped them into the stocking; and then the shoes went in, and the purse, and the farthing—which, of course, ran all the way down to the biggest red darn of all, in the very toe of the stocking.

But there was still abundance of room left. John Krinken and his wife filled it with an old book with silver clasps, and an old sharp-pointed pine cone, and then followed them up with a great deal of love and blessing .

And then the stocking was quite full.

It was midnight; and the fire had long been covered up, and John Krinken and his wife were fast asleep, and little Carl was in the midst of the hard bed and his sweet dreams as before. The stocking hung by the side of the fireplace, as still as if it had never walked about in its life, and not a sound could be heard but the beat of the surf upon the shore, and an occasional sigh from the wind.

But just at midnight there was another noise heard—as somebody says—

'You could hear on the roof
The scraping and prancing of each little hoof,'

—and down came Santa Claus through the chimney.

The first thing he did was to examine the stocking and its contents. At some of the articles he laughed, and at some he frowned, but most of all did he shake his head over the love that filled up all the spare room in the stocking. It was a kind of thing Santa Claus wasn't used to. But Santa Claus put all the things back just as he had found them, and stood smiling to himself for a minute, with his hands on his sides and his back to the fire. Then tapping the stocking with a little stick that he carried, he bent down over Carl and whispered some words in his ear, and went off up the chimney.

And the little mice came out and danced on the floor till the day broke.

'Christmas day in the morning!' Carl started up in his bed and shouted—

'Merry Christmas!'

The mice were a good deal startled, for they had not all seen their partners home; but they got out of the way as fast as they could, and when Carl bounded out of bed he stood alone upon the floor.

The floor felt cold—very. Carl's toes curled

up in the most disapproving manner possible, and he tried standing on his heels. Then he scampered across the floor. He seized the stocking in both hands and scampered back to bed again, screaming out—

'Apples! apples! apples!'

His mother being now nicely awakened by his clambering over her for the second time, she gave him a kiss and a 'Merry Christmas,' and got up, and as his father did the same, Carl was left in undisturbed possession of the warm bed.

'Mother,' said Carl, 'I dreamed last night that all my presents told me stories. Wasn't it funny?'

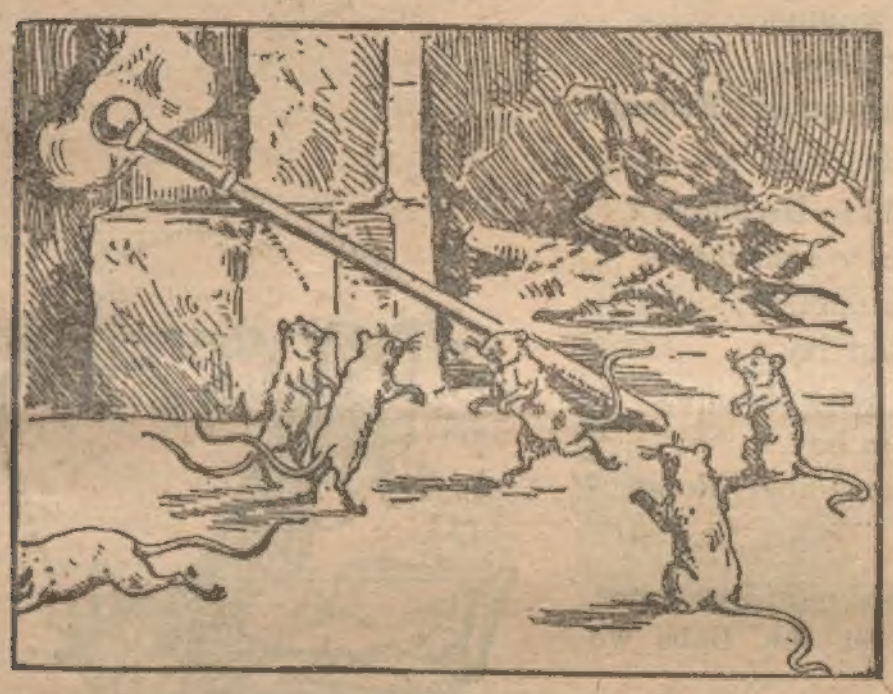
'Yes, I suppose so,' said his mother, as she walked away to turn the fish that was broiling. Carl lay still and looked at the stocking.

'Where did you come from, old stocking?' said he.

'From England,' said the stocking, very softly.

Carl started right up in bed, and looked between the sheets and over the counterpane, and behind the head board—there was nothing to be seen. Then he shook the stocking as hard as he could, but something in it struck his other hand. Pretty hard, too. Carl laid it down and looked at it again, and then cautiously putting in his hand, he with some difficulty found his way to the very toe; there lay the farthing, just where it had been all the time, upon the biggest of the red darns.

(To be continued.)



The Lost Bank Notes—A True Story.

(By Alice Armstrong.)

(Continued.)

'Can't help that ma-am, you'll have to have someone to identify you; we can't give money to everyone that comes along, you know.'

'Oh, who could I get to identify in time now,' wailed the poor widow, the tears running down her thin cheeks.

Fortunately the manager entered the room just then, and seeing her distress, he kindly enquired the cause, inviting the shivering woman, who was evidently half frozen, to take a seat by the stove in his private office, while he looked into her case. Fortunately, too, she had brought her husband's letters as well as the bank notice. The manager having glanced over these, decided that the money could be paid without risk to the bank, and ordered the clerk to deliver it to her, which that gentleman accordingly did, folding the crisp notes in a newspaper, every rustle of the new bills sounding to the sensitive ear of the trembling widow standing there in the gathering gloom, like a whisper from lips lying cold and still in that unknown and far away grave. Keeping out ten dollars wherewith to purchase much-needed comforts for the dear ones at home, she took the parcel containing the six hundred and ninety dollars, and hurried away. The thought of the poor famished children's delight in the delicious oranges and lemons, and the supper she meant to prepare for them, fresh juicy steak, soft white bread, and the bottle of milk she managed to procure, made her heart bound with joy as she turned homewards, her arms full of parcels.

As the dark winter evening closed in, the storm which had been threatening all day grew wilder. Out from the lighted streets and the shelter of the houses it beat upon her in all its fury. Her way lay along the top of a hill,—the whirling snowdrifts like sheeted ghosts flew shrieking past, tugging at her thin garments, stinging her face with their icy breath, once wrenching her parcels from her feeble grasp, and scattering them among the driving snow, whence her numbed hands painfully gathered them, clutching at and chasing them as they flew hither and thither almost beyond her reach.

Clasping them in her arms once more, she struggled on. Arriving home at last, weary, almost fainting, she found the kindly neighbor had brought a bundle of wood from her own scanty store and a good fire was crackling in the little stove, on which the bright tin kettle sang merrily. Soon the odor of broiling steak and fragrant tea filled the little kitchen. Jack was cooling his parched lips with a delicious orange, while little Mollie's cough seemed less harsh when a few spoonfuls of sweetened lemon juice had been administered to her. When the children, warmed, and their hunger appeased, had fallen asleep, and the two women sat comfortably sipping their tea, Jennie told the story of the money, and how she had brought it home with her.

'Arrah, show it to us Jennie Alanna' pleaded the kind-hearted Irish woman; 'Shure I never seen so much money in me life, and its glad I am that you have it, for yourself, and the children, Mavourneen.'

Jennie searched among her parcels for the one containing the money, turning them over at first carelessly, then hastily, then with white face and trembling fingers, with despair tugging at her heart, for the precious parcel was not among them; it was gone. Anxiously, almost frantically, the two women searched every corner of the kitchen and the path to the little gate by which she had come in, but no trace of it could they find. Mrs. Flynn ran home and told her husband, and he and three or four other men, leaving their warm fire sides, took lanterns and went with the distracted widow searching as well as the blinding storm would permit, along the way she had come. Slowly and carefully they went searching every foot of the way, even to the lighted streets of the city, but not a trace of the parcel could they find. So blinded and bewildered was the weeping woman, that she could not point out the exact place where she had dropped her parcels on her way home.

Weary and disheartened they waded homeward through drifts, almost dragging the despairing woman with them, leaving her at her own door with a promise to renew the search in the morning.

Morning broke wild and stormy, it had been a terrible night, snow, lying thick everywhere, was in some places piled into mountainous drifts. The men resumed the search according to promise, digging, shovelling, even sweeping the road, but no trace of the money, upon which so much depended could they discover.

(To be continued.)

LITTLE FOLKS

What's the very best rhyme for
December?
Why, of course you must know 'tis
REMEMBER!
Remember the snowflakes,
The green Christmas tree,
The red holly berries
Each season we see.
Remember! Remember! Remember!

What word do bells ring in
December?
Why, of course you can hear 'tis
REMEMBER!
Remember the carols,
The tinkle of sleighs,
The chickadee singing
In gloomiest days.
Remember! Remember! Remember!

What story is told in December?
To read it once is to remember.
Remember the manger,
The Baby that lay,
His sweet mother watching,
All cradled in hay.
Remember! Remember! Remember!

What song do we sing in December,
When the birth of the Babe we
remember?
The song of the angels,
We echo it still;
O'er all the earth singing
Of peace and good will.
Remember! Remember! Remember!

—Nora Archibald Smith, in 'North-Western Christian Advocate.'

The Reward of the Cheerful Candle.

(By Mary V. Worstell, in 'The Century.'

Once upon a time, two little candles lay side by side in a big box. Both were pure white.

Said one, 'I wonder what will become of us? Do you think we could be meant for a Christmas tree? (For you must know that to be put on a Christmas tree is the best possible thing that can happen to a candle.)

'Of course not! If we are meant for a Christmas tree it will be for some shabby little children. See if it isn't.'

'If we are,' said the first, 'I'll shine my very brightest; for the eyes of even poor children with only few pleasures, are enough to rival little candles on Christmas Eve.'

'If we are,' grumbled the second, 'I am not sure that I will allow myself to be lighted at all.'

Christmas Eve drew nearer and nearer. Sure enough, the two little candles, with many others, blue and pink and yellow and red, were bought for a Christmas tree.

On the day before Christmas, while it was still light, some young girls came to arrange the presents and make the tree ready for the evening.

'Oh! What a lot of pretty candles!' said one of them. 'They are such lovely colors—all except those two white ones. We will put those two out of sight because the red and pink ones are prettier.'

'Didn't I tell you what would

happen,' said the cross little candle in a whisper.

'Yes; but wait!' replied the other. 'Just shine your brightest all the time.'

'I won't,' snapped the cross one.

When evening came, ranged all round the tree were happy boys and girls. Soon every bough on the great tree blossomed with little lights. Some of the flames were faint, but many were bright. When the little white candles were lighted, the cross one just sputtered a minute and then went out. The other shone so brightly that a gentleman standing near said:

'Oh! What a brilliant little candle—but it is almost out of sight among the green branches. We ought to put it where it can be seen better.'

'Put it on the very tip-top,' said a little lady.

And that is where they did put it—on the very tip-top of the tree where it nodded and gleamed in answer to the smiling faces all around it.

Keeping Jesus's Birthday.

(Margaret C. Brown, in 'North-Western Christian Advocate.')

How shall little hearts keep Christmas
When the earth is wrapped in snow?
Little hearts must all be loving,
For in loving, love will grow.

How shall little hands keep Christmas
When the winds of winter blow?
Little hands make gifts for giving,
In this way our love to show.

How shall little lips keep Christmas
When the winter stars shine clear?
Little lips may sing glad praises
To the gentle Christ-child dear.

So may hearts and hands and voices
All together Christmas keep;
Once a child and now our Shepherd,
Jesus, guard thy lambs and sheep.

Edna's Stocking.

(By Elizabeth Ferguson Seat, in the 'Tribune Sunday Magazine.'

Edna rummaged in the box where the limited supply of family stockings were kept, but found it hard to decide which she should take.

'I s'pose I can take any of 'em. Mother said the fami'ly wouldn't need to hang up any because Santa Claus could never find his way up five flights back.'

The child held up a sock belonging to her brother Earl and inspected it critically; then she searched with suspicious fingers one of her mother's and two belonging to her sister Elvina, only to lay them all aside with a sigh. Then she took her own, a new pair, but so little and short! After a minute's thought, she brightened. 'I'll take 'em both; one wouldn't be worth his trouble.'

It was almost dark, but the different members of the family had not yet come in from their day's work. Slipping a gray shawl over her head, and tucking the stockings in the pocket of her apron, she went as quickly as possible down the stairs and out to the street, upon which the gray mists of a wintry Christmas Eve were falling. Taking a short cut through an alley she soon came out upon Avondale ave. The imposing structures of brick and stone, the large, snow-covered grounds, the clumps of evergreens, were all splendid and made her heart beat faster, for she had determined that in one of those palaces, somewhere, her Christmas stocking should be hung.

'This one's sure to be on his route,' she whispered, and with firm step walked up to a front door through whose ground-glass surface the light filtered cheerfully. Standing on tiptoe, she placed her finger upon the button and kept it there until the door was jerked open by a man who seemed frightened.

'Why do you ring like that?' he demanded in astonishment at the tiny figure under the trailing shawl. 'What do you want?'

'To see the lady of the house,' she replied firmly.

A boy standing back in the hall laughed. 'Here, mother,' he called mischievously, 'you're wanted. Be quick about it!'

A sweet woman in a red gown

Blessed Christmas.

(By Carolyn S. Bailey, in 'Congregationalist and Christian World.')

How many shining tapers to light a Christmas tree,
How many toys and dollies for little folks to see,
How many prancing reindeer to dash across the snow,
How many little stockings all hanging in a row,
How many merry carols, how many presents, say—
To make for little children a blessed Christmas day?

Ah, listen, once on Christmas there came a baby boy,
The stars his Christmas tapers, and mother's love his joy,
With only hay to wrap him and cattle by his bed,
And yet he heard the angels come singing overhead,
A very little loving and grateful hearts alway
Will make for little children a blessed Christmas day.

came forward. 'Bring her in, Simmons!'

Under the chandelier, surrounded by a group consisting of servants, the mother and two fine, manly boys, the child drew out the two stockings.

'Please,' she said bravely, 'durst I hang up my stockin's at your house? We're awful high up, fift' floor, and mother said 'twould be no use—he never climbs up to no such places, Santa doesn't, so I thought that a place like this, bein' in his reg'lar route, why he just couldn't miss it, and these wouldn't take very much room.'

The boys suddenly fled out of sight, and the servants turned away their heads, as the sweet woman took the little stockings and said cordially: 'Yes indeed, I'm so glad you thought about it; there's plenty of room, and I won't forget to put them right in his road. Be sure to call and see what he left for you.'

'Yes, ma'am,' replied Edna, in great relief. 'I'll be sure to remember the house, because it's got its name written right out in the stone walk by the gate, 'Ivy Lodge.' My father used to belong to a lodge before he died, and when he was dead they made his funeral, so I'll be sure to remember.'

As Edna hurried home, for it was now pretty dark, and she was afraid that her mother might have come home and grown uneasy at her absence, she did not notice that the two boys and the man who had opened the door were keeping her in sight every step of the way, even up the five flights back, and marked the number which was on the outside door of their little flat.

Christmas was a holiday, and the family slept late, so when Edna crept out of bed at six o'clock and dressed as noiselessly as possible, no one stirred. She put the friendly gray shawl about her and opened the door cautiously, almost falling into two huge baskets that blocked it. On the top of each lay one of the stockings marked: 'From Santa Claus, with much love.' The stockings were packed tight and bulging with lumps. Opening the door to its widest extent, she tried to drag the hampers in, but gave it up just as Earl came out sleepily, saying in astonishment:

'Well! What on earth does it mean?'

But Edna was considering a hard problem. 'They showed him the way, the Avondale-Avenues did; but what I want to know is how did he ever drag such heavy baskets clear up to the fift' floor.

The Real Santa Claus.

(S. E. Kiser, in 'Chicago Record-Herald.')

There is a Santa Claus, my dear,
Who reaches out year after year
To spread his blessings further yet,
To make the world a place of joy;
To bring in kindness and to let
Us conquer passions that destroy.
There is a Santa Claus, indeed,
Alive and real, who seeks to lead
Us from the valleys dark and drear
Up to the pleasant slopes above—
Ah, have you never guessed, my dear,
That Santa Claus, in truth, is Love?

Get Straight When Little.

Mr. Wooding had bought a nice home with trees and shrubs of all kinds around it. One tree had grown quite large, right in front of the house, but crooked.

Mr. Wooding thought he would straighten that tree. He got strong men, who planted thick stakes on either side of the tree, and then with a strong rope, they tried to bend it straight. It was no use, it had grown crooked.

While the men were pulling at the rope, Eddie and his sister stood by, looking at them. 'See, children,' said Mr. Wooding,' if that tree had been straightened when it was little, it would now be beautiful. It could have been done easily. It is now too big and we can't make it straight. It will stay crooked as long as it lives. So it is with men and women. When little they can grow straight and become good and useful. If they grow up crooked that is, with a bad character and disposition, they are likely always to remain so.'

Don't grow up crooked and ugly. Grow straight. That is grow beautiful and good.—'Pansy.'

Expiring Subscriptions.

Would each subscriber kindly look at the address tag on this paper? If the date thereon is Dec. it is time that the renewals were sent in so as to avoid losing a single copy. As renewals always date from the expiry of the old subscriptions, subscribers lose nothing by remitting a little in advance.

Correspondence

Well, little friends, Christmas will soon be here again, does it seem 'ages' since this time last year? (to us older ones it is but a little while).

Have you begun to write letters to Santa Claus? Have you secrets to keep? Have you already had a hand in stirring the plum pudding?

Such a lot of goodwill at Christmas, is there not? Yet we never get tired of saying 'Merry Christmas!' and the more we hear it said, the brighter grow our faces. Dear Christmas time! Thank God for His love, and thank God for Christmas! What shall I wish you this Christmas? The very best thing I can think of is that you may have the joy of giving others happiness and there is no fear about your own good time, and remember, little friends, were it not for that first gift of the Christ-Child so many years ago, this happiness would not be ours to-day. In some parts of Germany they believe that the Christ-Child comes on Christmas Eve and visits the little ones, leaving good wishes and gifts by each little sleeper.

Is it not a beautiful thought? and to us, children, the Christ-Child comes—to every heart that opens to Him—and it is His presence there that accounts for this joy of giving.

And now, we do wish everybody a Happy, Happy Christmas on

'This holy day when Christ the Lord
Took on Him our humanity
For little children everywhere.'

very much. There was a gentleman that gave me this paper. I think it was very kind of him.

JOHANNES JENSEN.

H., Sask.

Dear Editor,—I take the 'Northern Messenger,' and I think it is a very good paper. I go to school. I am in the fifth book. We have a nice little school with an organ and library in it. We had a concert last week, and the money we made at it was to go for more books for the library and games for the school. My father bought me a little black colt nine years ago. I called him 'Dandy.' I can ride and drive him. We have seventeen head of horses and fifty-two head of cattle. We had four thousand bushels of wheat this fall. I have two brothers and three sisters. I had one little brother who died this spring. We live eight miles from the nearest station. I am very fond of drawing. I am thirteen years old.

C., Ont.

Dear Editor,—We have Sunday school every Sunday. We get the 'Messenger' there, and I like to read the letters. The answer to H. Everett Latimer's question will be found in the 14th chapterr of Judges, the 14th and 18th verses. I go to school every day, and I am in the Third Book. The Temperance people presented our council with a petition of over 500 names asking for a vote on local option, but the council did not grant their request, but the people are going to carry on the campaign just the same to try and drive the bar out of our township. We are going to have a school concert.

MARY M. H.

OUR PICTURES.

1. 'Baby on the Fence.' Tom H. Chisholm (11), C., Ont.

2. 'Boy with Kite.' C. Lilley (10). Address not given.

3. 'Greyhound.' Lorne Moore (10), B. M.,

4. 'A Church.' Lena A. S., (14), H., Ont.

5. 'The Pet Lamb.' Marjory Armour, A. M., Ont.

6. 'Church.' Norton Gerrie (9), I., Ont.

C. C., N.S.

Dear Editor,—This is my first letter to the 'Messenger.' I have one sister and one brother. We have a very nice colt. I live on a large farm. The new M. and V. B. Railway runs through our land. They are grading the road now. My playmates and I go down to the track after school and throw the men apples, and the men are very glad to get them.

FLOYD SMITH (age 9).

W.

Dear Editor,—I go to school, and soon will be in the third reader. We have a quarter of a mile to go to school. Who can give me the answer to Samson's riddle, Out of the eater came forth meat. Out of the strong came forth sweetness. I am 8 years of age.

GERTRUDE SARGENT.

V., B.C.

Dear Editor,—This is my first letter to the 'Messenger.' I live on a farm five miles from town, and I go to school every day. There are two rooms in our school. I am in the third reader. I like very much to go to school. I have six rabbits and some pigeons. We have over a hundred chickens, and we have twenty acres of land, eight of which are cleared. We have just finished picking apples. I like fruit stores, Post-office, school, church, and experimental farm. There are lots of picnics on the farm in the summer.

My father is a trackman. I am in the sixth grade. I also go to A. every week for my music lesson. My papa bought a nice piano, and I am learning to play quite well.

ELSIE SMITH.

M., Man.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl ten years of age. I have three sisters. I go to school, and am in Grade Five. We have a new schoolhouse. It has a basement, and in the basement there is a furnace. The name of the school is West Oakland. We have a flag for the school, but it is not put up yet. I like reading. I have read quite a lot of books. My sister Florence takes the 'Northern Messenger,' and we like it very much. I always read it through.

I am sending some puzzles.

I. What walks, runs, has four eyes, and cannot see?

II. One-fourth of a cross and a circle complete,
Two semi-circles on a straight line meet,
A triangle standing upon two feet,
Two semi-circles and a circle complete?

WILHELMINA McCUAIG.

N.S.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl eleven years old. I have three sisters and one brother living, and one little brother that died. His name was Harold. I live near the station,

GOD'S BEST GIFT TO MAN.

I hear the bells of Christmas,
Telling their story abroad,
Of the beautiful, beautiful present,
That was sent from our own, true God.

Oh! such a beautiful present
That ever came upon earth,
Was the beautiful noble baby!
Oh joy, a Saviour's birth.

The bells were ringing joyfully,
They were heard to sweetly say,
Won't you come and see the baby,
That was born on Christmas day.

That story came to the wise men
Who lived in the east afar,
God sent a guide to the wise men
It was a great big star.

They got on their camel's backs, and went,
And the star showed the men the way
Until it stood right over the place,
Where the dear little baby lay.

Composed by VERA VINCENT, (aged 10.)
(Unaltered by Cor. Ed.)

OUR BIRTHDAY BOOK.

DECEMBER.

On earth peace, good will toward men.—Luke ii., 14.

3.

Agnes M

8.

Dochie Pearce, Mary M. H. (12).

10.

Elizabeth Read.

17.

Bertie P. McG., Jennie McNayer, T. C. Dobson.

19.

Simon A. Campbell, Bessie P. Wiley, Iva L. Thomas.

21.

Sarah E. Twicker, Gertie Dand.

23.

Harris Twicker, Hattie Twicker, Nessie Rea Patterson, Bessie Ogilvy.

24.

J. McCaskill, Florence Long.

25.

Annie May Ritter, Lena Porter, M. F. O'Neil.

26.

D. J. Bradley, S. Agnes Price.

27.

Bertha C. Forbes, Morton Hall, William E. Simpson, Elizabeth Mary McNair (12).

28.

Eleanor F. Millar.

29.

Alice Porter.

30.

Ella Pardy.

31.

Lula T. M., William A. Duncan.

LESSON XIV.—DECEMBER 31, 1905.

REVIEW OF THE FOURTH QUARTER.

Golden Text.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness. —Ps. lxv., 11.

Home Readings.

Monday, December 25.—Ezra i., 1-11.
Tuesday, December 26.—Ezra iii., 10—iv., 5.
Wednesday, December 27.—Zech. iv., 1-10.
Thursday, December 28.—Ezra viii., 21-32.
Friday, December 29.—Neh. i., 1-11.
Saturday, December 30.—Neh. v., 7-20.
Sunday, December 31.—Neh. viii., 81-8.

(By Davis W. Clark.)

There is a splendid stir and movement, cumulative in its interest in this epoch of two hundred years just covered, which fairly fascinates the reader. There is life and continuity in the narrative. Each event and person seems tributary to the whole. It is the picture of a nation at school. The term is seventy years. The discipline is severe, the training rigorous. The end is the correction of faith and conduct. The training of the exile results in a higher prizing of religion, temple, ritual, and Scripture. One plainly sees who helped and who hindered in this Divine evolution. The events are the exile, 605 B. C.; the destruction of the temple, 536 B. C.; the first return, 536 B. C.; the temple rebuilt, 516 B. C. The biography of the period is peculiarly rich. It makes a galaxy in which Daniel, Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Zerrubabel, Ezra, Esther and Nehemiah appear.

There is not in literature a more vivid word-picture than that which describes the last night in Babylon. Cyrus is at the gate, but the incident of a siege does not interfere with a banquet Belshazzar has planned. The revellers are sobered by sight of a hand writing some mystic legend on the wall, which Daniel interprets as being the last page in Babylonion history. (Dan. v., 17-30.

The palace and the den—what a contrast! In that building 'the marvel of mankind,' the monarch of the world, was restless and unhappy. An upbraiding conscience and a consciousness of unkingly weakness were his companions. In the den Daniel had the indescribable joy of an approving conscience. His security was complete, his companionship angelic. The steadfastness of Daniel and his consequent miraculous deliverance was the finishing touch in the providential process of preparing the Hebrews for their exit from bondage. (Dan. vi., 10-23.)

This page is a mirror of Providence. God wanted His people exiled. They were to learn lessons in adversity, prosperity could never teach them; and not for their own sakes only, but that through them, in hovel and palace alike, the true God might be made known among the heathen. After seventy years God wanted His people emancipated. Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were the merest instruments of a wonder-working Providence. 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as brooks of water, and He inclines it whither He will.' (Prov. xxi., 1; Ezra. i., 1-11.)

This great undertaking, the rebuilding of the temple, is substantial evidence of the thoroughness of the schooling of the exile. In spite of small resources, numerous enemies, and a depressing environment. The seemingly impossible was cheerfully undertaken and triumphantly achieved. Union contributed to their strength. They gathered together as one man. (Ezra iii., 10—iv., 5.)

The vision bears a spiritual significance upon its face. The Church is the candlestick set forth in the moral darkness of the world. Above the candlestick of the vision was a reservoir; from the reservoir there were seven pipes to each lamp—seven, the number of perfection, indicating the abundant supply. On either side of the candlestick stood an olive-tree that poured its oil into the reservoir. The trees represent the kingship and priesthood of Jesus, who supplies the reservoir with the Holy Spirit. It is not the lamp that burns. The lamp is only the vehicle of the oil. It is not the Church that illuminates, but the Holy Spirit through the Church. The Church is all gold. It is very precious, purchased with a great price. The Church has many branches, but it is one candlestick. (Zech iv., 1-10.)

The fate of a race of exiles trembles in the balance held in the hand of a capricious despot. How the irreversible decree shall be reversed is the problem. In the solution the destiny of the Hebrew nation is involved, and with that also the Scripture, ritual, and hope of the Messiah. On the dark background of the plot the characters of the deliverers stand like white cameos in clear-cut outline and high relief. (Esther iv., 10; v., 3.)

Ezra was a saviour of Judaism. It was a crisis in the national life. Seventy years had passed since the return from the captivity. Zerubbabel, the prince of Judah, had left the little colony in Jerusalem, and gone back to Babylon, his birthplace, to end his days. The defences of Jerusalem were still unfinished. There was a sort of creeping paralysis of indifference in Church and State. There was a widening gap between nobles and rustics. Paganism was making subtle inroads. The days of the Hebrew State and religion were numbered. Then appeared the 'second Moses.' The nobility of Ezra's personal character and his worth to his nation can hardly be overestimated. He put an imprint upon his Church which it bears to this day. And as Christianity is evolved from Judaism, Christianity itself may be said to bear to some extent the marks of the 'good scribe.' (Ezra viii., 21-32.)

Study of this incident reveals Nehemiah as one of the most illustrious examples of disinterested patriotism, which history, sacred or profane, affords. He had a life tenure upon an edifice of high rank and many emoluments. He stood next to the monarch of the world. A palace was at his disposal, with all its luxurious appointments. But for the sake of his countrymen he relinquished all. What enhances the deed is that it was not done in a burst of enthusiasm, but after a considerable period, in which every element and phase of the situation was passed in review. (Neh i., 1-11.)

Paul cautions the Corinthians to keep the wing of love unfurled. The heterogeneous composition of the Christian societies makes this necessary. Paul is liberal. He says: 'We know an idol is a nonentity. Meat can not be affected by being placed before an idol. Meat, whether so placed or not, can be eaten without scruples. But be careful. Don't let the wing of knowledge drive you blindly round the small circle of a selfish personal interest. Spread your other wing—the white pinion of love.' In your Church at Corinth there are many novices in Christianity. Theoretically they know that an idol is nothing, but practically they have not been able as yet to rid themselves of superstitious notions imbibed with their mother's milk. Do not urge such a one to violate his conscientious scruples while they remain. If, under your advice, he does what his conscience forbids, he sins.' The conditions—then and now and always—demand a generous self-denial for the sake of others. (I. Cor. x., 23-33.)

The rebuilding of the wall was a great enterprise. The circumstances were unfavorable. Laborers were few and inexperienced. Enemies were many and crafty. Instead of a clean site there was a heap of rubbish. But the genius and zeal of Nehemiah were more than a match for such adverse conditions. His organizing and administrative ability were superb. Everybody was enlisted, working as families and guilds. There was good-natured rivalry. The work was done in incredibly short time. The temple, after seventy years of exposure was now safe from sacrilegious and plundering hands. (Neh. iv., 7-20.)

Ezra's public reading of the law makes one of the most effective and picturesque scenes in the Bible. Fifty thousand listened in the great plaza in Jerusalem. Ezra stood upon a raised platform. At sight of the book of the law the people rose in token of their reverence. No doubt Ezra praised God, that out of the wreck of the past this treasure had been preserved. All eats were attentive. Good listening was matched by good reading. (Neh. viii., 8-18.)

The last book of the Old Testament is a perfect Mt. Sinai, quaking, flashing, thundering with the righteous indignation of Jehovah against the people, whom He had lifted to heaven in privilege, but who proved unworthy of their exaltation. Who can abide the day of his coming: He shall be as fierce as refiner's fire, He shall be as caustic as lye. Yet here, as everywhere in the Bible, the beatitude is placed over against the woe. If God's people, even at this late date, will bring in all the tithes, the sluices of blessing will be opened wide. (Mal. iii., 1-12.)

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, Dec. 31.—Topic—Looking backward. What have I learned this year? Deut. viii., 8-20.

LOOKING BACKWARD: WHAT HAVE I LEARNED THIS YEAR?

The experience of ancient Israel in the wilderness is a picture of human life, individually and collectively. We are to lend ourselves to a Divine guidance, the pillar and cloud of Providence. We are to expect Divine provision and protection. When we reach some promised land of success and plenty, we are not to forget who brought us thither, and say, 'My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.' On the contrary, we are to remember it is 'the Lord that giveth power and wealth.' The last day of the year is an opportunity for reviewing the path, by which we have come, and expressing our Divine protection and provision. The psalmist says: 'The Lord hath been mindful of us; He will bless us.' Past mindfulness is pledge of future blessing.

Junior C. E. Topic.

LESSONS REMEMBERED THIS YEAR.

Monday, Dec. 25.—Moses's faith. Heb. xi., 24-28.

Tuesday, Dec. 26.—Aaron's weakness. Ex. xxxii., 21-24.

Wednesday, Dec. 27.—Caleb's whole-hearted service. Josh. xiv., 8.

Thursday, Dec. 28.—Gideon's bravery. Judg. vi., 12.

Friday, Dec. 29.—Ruth's devotion. Ruth i., 15-18.

Saturday, Dec. 30.—Samuel's piety. I. Sam. iii., 19-20.

Sunday, Dec. 31.—Topic—What have you learned in this year's meetings? Deut. viii., 2.

Class Committee for Christmas Giving.

All the classes will join in the Christmas giving of the school. Many classes, also, may wish to give to special objects outside of the school's announced purposes. In both cases it is a good plan to encourage the class to make its own choices so far as possible. The scholars will have a deeper interest in whatever they themselves propose. Choosing a class committee to suggest these choices will often be a business-like way of getting at it. The committee of two or three will, of course, consult with the teacher, and make a report a week or two before Christmas for the class to act upon. It may be a dinner for a poor family, or a gift of coal or clothing, or providing suitable garments for one of the scholars in the school, or collecting books and games for children in one of the hospitals, or any other object that may appeal to that particular class.

Sample Copies.

Any subscriber who would like to have specimen copies of the 'Northern Messenger' sent to friends can send the names with addresses and we will be pleased to supply them free of cost.

Temperance

'Sonny.'

(Lillian C. Hume, in the 'Temperance Monthly.')

Sonny was such a dear little fellow, clear blue eyes, shining golden hair, winning little ways and broken baby talk; one would have fancied him the pet and darling of some happy home circle. And true enough, his mother's heart was wrapped up in him, so much indeed that she had none to spare for her husband, a man older than herself by many years, and whom her parents had almost forced her to marry. Yet strange as it seems, the deepest love of Sonny's little heart was given to the father, who, when he came home sober (a very rare occurrence) would perhaps bestow a careless kiss on the little son waiting to greet him on the doorstep.

Too often, alas, harsh words and commands to 'get out of the way,' enforced by a rough push or an angry blow, would be the child's daily portion in place of the longed-for kiss.

Sonny never cried at such times. I think his little mind fancied that crying would be in some way disloyal, but the blue eyes would fill with great tears and the baby lips would quiver in spite of his brave attempts to keep them tightly closed.

And one Christmas Eve his father's hand struck out more heavily than usual, and Sonny, staggering backwards, caught his foot on the fender and fell. His poor mother coming in an instant afterwards saw the little form enveloped in flames. Darting forwards, regardless of scorched hands and singed face, she managed to extinguish the child's clothing, and rushing out into the darkness rapidly bore the insensible little one to our hospital.

Doctors and nurses did their best, but all in vain. The burns might have healed in time, but the sensitive little frame had received too great a shock, and in spite of our efforts, little Sonny's life was ebbing painlessly away.

His mother knelt by the bedside, watching, watching the dear little face, and presently the blue eyes opened dreamily.

'Mover,' said the baby voice, 'where's farver? Sonny want him.'

'Hush! darling, hush! oh, my Sonny, you are going away from me to live with the Good Shepherd, who gathers the lambs in His Arms.'

'Is I, mover? but 'oo must come too, an' farver.'

'Yes, darling, mother will come very soon.' 'An' faver,' went on the child persistently, 'Sonny "must" have farver too. Will mover bring him to Sonny?'

There was a silence, a silence that might be felt as the mother buried her head in her child's pillow. He waited a moment patiently, the blue eyes closing and then resolutely opening again—

'Mover, p'omise, p'omise, Sonny, to bring farver, too,' pleaded the little voice once more. Just then a man's heavy step was heard and the father entered, trembling from head to foot and ashy pale. The mother shuddered as she heard him approach, but she never raised her head. But Sonny's face brightened at once and he tried to raise himself.

'Farver, farver!' he said eagerly 'Mover says Sonny's going to see the Good Shepherd, but Sonny can't go till farver p'omises to come too—P'ease farver dear, p'omise quick, 'cause Sonny's so tired an' s'eepy.'

'Father doesn't know the way, Sonny' faltered the heart-broken man, kneeling humbly on the other side of the bed.

'Mover'll show him,' answered the child confidently.

Then at last the mother raised her head and looked steadily at her husband. I watching her, could almost see the battle raging in her heart. But love conquered, and whispering, 'For Sonny's sake,' she stretched out her hand to him, and he with a gasping husky sob took it. Sonny put his hand as if in blessing on the clasped hands of his parents, and murmuring drowsily—'Farver an' mover an' Sonny, all going to the Good Shepherd,' his little voice grew fainter and fainter, and as he ended the sweet eyes closed, and with one long-drawn sigh little Sonny's earthly life ceased, and he entered into Life everlasting.

His mother kept her promise nobly, and aided by her, Sonny's father made a gallant struggle against the sin which had made their home so desolate. And when 'by God's help' he had conquered, they both turned their whole endeavors to the assistance of others who were in the same terrible bondage. There are many in that town to-day who owe their restored homes and happy lives, to the untiring efforts of Sonny's 'Farver.'

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The Sadness of the Holiday Season.

To those whose life is given to Christ's work of 'seeking and saving,' no more painful thought comes than that of the dangers of this holiday season. At this time when men's hearts are filled with generous impulses when to every loved one to every little child for all good friends, gifts and good wishes are freely given to; at this time the misguided impulse to generosity seems to lead more men into temptation to thrust it upon them. Those who would hesitate are shy of repulsing friendly offers to treat, and still more afraid of seeming ungenerous. Those who do not realize the evil and danger are unconsciously thrusting into danger the weak ones, while those who have given their lives to evil find in the jolly hearty goodfellowship of the time a cover for their wickedness and an added opportunity to work harm.

Let all who love the Christ-Child and follow the Christ watch and pray and not only stand fast themselves, but stand ready to lend a hand. Let the word or look or action needed to strengthen the weak brother be quickly given. Let us all push all the beautiful benevolences of Christmas time, not only working ourselves, but enthusing others until all are too busy and happy to fall into the tempting snares strewn along the by-ways.

HOUSEHOLD.

Love.

What is the thought of Christmas?—Giving.
What is the heart of Christmas?—Love.
What is the hope of Christmas?—Living.
What is the joy of Christmas?—Love.

No silver or gold is needed for giving,
If the heart is filled with Christmas love;
For the hope of the world is kindly living,
Learned from the joy of God above.

—Selected.

Christmas Turkey.

Every housekeeper is supposed to know how to dress a fowl, yet it is in such simple things as this that the average cook fails. The first thing to be done is to singe the bird by holding it over blazing paper to remove the long hairs. To draw the bird, open the vent and loosen the two muscles that hold the viscera in place. Also loosen the crop and pipes at the neck, and, passing the hand up the back, draw out the mass without separating it. If this is done carefully there is no danger of breaking the gall bladder. Cut the oil bag carefully from the tail and take out every particle of it, as it imparts a strong odor. If there are large pin feathers, take them out with the point of a knife, and also take out every part of the windpipe, lights, crop and kidneys.

Turn the skin back at the neck and cut off the neck close to the body. Draw out the tendons from the drumsticks with a dull-pointed skewer or fork. If the bird is freshly killed this can easily be done, but there is always one large tendon that refuses to come out. The flesh of the drumstick is very much more tender if this is done, and if the cook intends to draw out the tendons the butcher should not be allowed to chop off the feet at the joint, as he will be sure to do if not prevented. After the feet are once chopped off it will be impossible to draw out the sinews, and the drumstick will be the toughest portion of the bird.

All the fat on the inside of the fowl should be removed.

Upon just two things the excellence of dressing depends—its dryness and the seasonings used. If it can be served in solid spoonfuls it is an utter failure; it must be in crumbs, soft, moist and well flavored. Use home-made bread, and rub the soft part inside the crust into fine crumbs; soak the crust, if not dark brown, in milk until perfectly soft, press out all the moisture possible, crumble, and add to the dry crumbs. This will moisten the mass sufficiently, with the bits of butter added and the moisture that will be freed inside the turkey in cooking. Season with pepper, salt, savory and thyme, butter cut into bits, and a piece of thin lemon-peel. Regulate the amount of these seasonings to the degree of flavor desired—mild or very pronounced. Fill the turkey not more than two-thirds full, as the bread will swell materially. Any extra dressing may be browned in a saucer in a roasting-pan with the turkey. Roast the turkey breast down, propping up with bread crusts.

After the turkey has been stuffed, skewer the 'drumsticks' down to the tail, and fasten the skin of the neck down to the bone, to hold the stuffing in. Skewer the wings close to the body with a long skewer, and with firm twine tie this skewer to the one that holds the 'drumsticks.' If these skewers are properly put in it will not be necessary to sew up the bird.

If fowls are not cooked immediately after killing, while still warm, they should be left 24 hours.

The Christmas Atmosphere.

Perhaps we get the right atmosphere most surely when we go outside our own little circle and give to the neighbor we are enjoined to love. We may pack a basket with good things for the poor, or carry fruit and flowers to the hospital; but the true heavenly glow

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Note—New subscribers will get the remainder of this year free.

Note—Subscribers getting up clubs are entitled to charge full subscription rates from new subscribers and to retain the difference between these and the above club rate to cover their expenses.

Note—One's own subscription does not count in this offer because it does not require canvassing.

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Note—To stimulate further effort, and as some will find it easy to get more than three or four subscribers, we will in addition to the foregoing remarkable offers, commencing November 15th, 1905, and until further notice, award each day to the subscriber sending us in the largest amount of subscription money for our various publications on that day,

OUR RED LETTER COLORED PLATE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE.

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Those who prefer, instead of working on the basis of the above Club offers, may take subscriptions for any of our publications at the full rates, and we will allow a commission of twenty-five percent (one quarter) on renewal subscriptions and fifty percent (one half) on new subscriptions. But these terms are only available for those sending Five dollars or more at a time.

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JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Publishers, 'Witness' Building, Montreal.

comes when we recognize that our neighbor is someone nearer at hand, in need of more discriminating help. It is easy to give to those destitute poor who have passed through such a furnace of sin and misery and foolishness that they have hardened back into a primitive condition, and are willing to rejoice over bread they have not earned, to eat, drink, and be merry, whether to-morrow they die or not; but the poor who most need us are nearer our own station, pitifully hiding their poverty, whether of love or gold, and standing in need of tact and fine sympathy—of spiritual rather than of material gifts. We rise into a heavenly light when we minister to them.—Philadelphia 'Methodist.'

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THE 'NORTHERN MESSENGER' is printed and published every week at the 'Witness' Building, at the corner of Craig and St. Peter streets, in the city of Montreal, by John Redpath Dougall and Frederick Eugene Dougall, both of Montreal.

All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son,' and all letters to the editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'

Our Daily Jubilee Award.

Probably none of those who secured the awards expected them on such small remittances

We continue to receive daily, most congratulatory letters concerning the 'Witness' Diamond Jubilee, all of which are heartily appreciated. These letters are being reproduced in our columns.

Our friends all over the Dominion are joining with us in celebrating our sixtieth anniversary of the foundation of the 'Witness.' In another place will be found the special Diamond Jubilee club offers, including in addition to reduced rates THE GIFT of one of our Red Letter colored plate illustrated Bibles. One of these handsome books is given each day to the subscriber from whom we receive the largest amount of subscription money (net), for our publications.

(Remittances from news agents or from Sunday School clubs for the "Northern Messenger,' or from publishers, or from any one who is not a subscriber to one of our publications, do not count in this offer.)

The Bibles awarded free appear good value for four dollars.

The list of successful club raisers for last week, with the amount of subscriptions each sent in is as follows:—

Dec. 4. Monday, Robt. Burns, Parkhill, Ont	$ 3.00
Dec. 5. Tuesday, J. Petreau, Moffatt, Sask	1.80
Dec. 6. Wednesday, Cecil Elton, Cowley, Alta	3.00
Dec. 7. Thursday, J. Mulligan, Port Hope, Ont	7.75
Dec. 8. Friday, W. D. Chisholm, New Glasgow, N.S.	10.50
Dec. 9. Saturday, Mrs. W. Angle, Forks Road, Ont	6.00

Each of the above will receive one of these red letter illustrated Bibles Free, besides their commission.

Who will be the successful subscribers for next week? The smallness of the amounts sent in should encourage others to go and do likewise or a little better.

PLEASANT SURPRISE.

Cairnside, Dec. 6th, 1905.

Dear Sirs,—I have received by mail a Bible, and in reply must thank you very much. I was taken by surprise when reading the prize published in the 'Witness'; I have been a reader of the 'Witness' since 1853, and have sent you clubs ever since the year 1860; and have taken the 'Messenger' since it was first published. I admire the 'Witness' and 'Messenger' very much for the principles they uphold. Hoping that the publishers may be spared long in health and strength to continue publishing the same.

I remain, yours sincerely,

JOHN RITCHIE, SR.,
Cairnside, Que.

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.

Ottawa, 11th December, 1905.

Dear Mr. Dougall,—

Permit me, as an old friend, to offer you my hearty and sincere congratulations upon the jubilee of your paper.

In the city in which you live, and in the community in which the "Witness" circulates, a large section of the population does not share your religious convictions, and to that section, I myself belong; but whether agreeing or disagreeing, all must recognize and admire the elevated tone with which you have always maintained your views in the discussion of all questions, and especially with regard to those vexed problems too often recurring in our national life.

Personally, it has always been a source of high gratification to me when you have found it consistent with your own conception of public duty to support me on the different subjects of public policy with which I have had to deal.

On the other hand, whenever you differed from me, and thought me in the wrong, your criticisms derived all the greater force from my intimate conviction that they were inspired by that same sense of public duty.

Please accept the expression of my sincere wishes for your continued success.

Believe me, dear Mr. Dougall,
Yours very sincerely,
WILFRID LAURIER.

J. R. Dougall, Esq.
"The Witness," Montreal.

THE REV. DR. ARMSTRONG.

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, writes regarding the "Witness" Jubilee:—

Ottawa, Dec. 7, 1905.

Editor of the "Witness":

Dear Sir:—Most heartily do I join in the congratulations that are pouring in upon he "Witness" in connection with the completion of sixty years faithful and unique service.

I have been a reader of the "Witness" ever since I was able to read anything, and sincerely acknowledge my indebtedness to it.

What your paper has done in the past in creating wholesome, moral sentiment in the community and maintaining higher ideals of life, only the Great Day will reveal.

It is a serious question with parents what paper they shall admit into their homes. We always felt safe with the "Witness."

May your paper continue through many generations, the champion of Truth, Purity and Righteousness, and vigorous as ever in smiting the evil and upholding the good.

Yours sincerely,

W. D. ARMSTRONG.

THE MONTREAL 'WITNESS' JUBILEE.

(From the Toronto 'Globe.')

Sixty years ago the first number of the Montreal 'Weekly Witness' was sent out to the people of Canada as a specimen, and it was followed shortly afterwards by the first number of a regular series that has gone on uninterruptedly ever since. Forty-five years ago the 'Daily Witness' began its course, and that has been one of steady continuance in well-doing. Both the weekly and the daily editions have reached a stable and well-recognized position in Canadian journalism, and all who admire a courageous, though sometimes discouraging, struggle for the right will be glad to believe the opinion of the 'Witness' about the future of Canada is applicable to itself, that 'there never was a time when its outlook was more buoyant and hopeful.'

Not many Canadian journalists of the present day can recall the personality of the founder of the 'Witness,' the late Mr. John Dougall. He was a strenuous and persistent advocate of temperance in times when the constituency to which he appealed, and which he did much to develop, was far from being as extensive as it is now. With growing experience he broadened the outlook of his journal, without abating a jot of his ideal or compromising on a single one of his principles, until it took its present well-defined place as a high-toned, independent newspaper, enterprising in the collection and dissemination of news, fearless in its denunciation of wrong, and generous in its recognition of all that makes for righteousness.

The present proprietor of the 'Witness,' Mr. John R. Dougall, has worthily carried out the ideals and more than maintained the reputation of the 'Witness.' Under his management its character has been improved and its influence strengthened, while it has retained its uncompromising attitude to the liquor traffic and all the evils which are associated with it. This attitude has made it more difficult to achieve financial success, but a struggle of this sort heroically and fully maintained never fails to secure recognition, and the wide circle of friends, sympathizers, and supporters which the 'Witness' has gathered around it is the best proof that the practice of self-denial has not been unappreciated.—

INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM.

(From the Ottawa 'Journal.')

The Montreal 'Witness' is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee, the close of the sixtieth year of its publication by father and son. John Dougall, the father, founded the 'Witness' in the earlier part of the last century and John Redpath Dougall, the son, is conducting the 'Witness to-day on the same lines as those upon which it was instituted. These lines are the lines of truth and righteousness as the Dougalls have seen them. They have been inspired apparently of the loftiest ideals. In the wide range of subjects upon which the modern press must serve in the shaping of public opinion—a range so wide that few persons outside the newspaper business recognize its extent—the 'Witness' has been able to adhere steadfastly to its original ideals of cleanliness and fair play.

It is not the only newspaper in Canada in which these ideals are cherished. But that the 'Witness' should have pursued them so consistently, so effectively and for so long a time, is a fact which cannot fail to have stimulated the wholesome emulation of many of its contemporaries. In the domestic and public life of Canada, the 'Witness' must have been the means to the accomplishment of much good.

It is receiving congratulation and a practically unstinted praise in all quarters in Canada, even from newspapers, representing phases of thought entirely different from those which seem to have governed the 'Witness' policy. Generalities, perhaps, would hardly serve to tell what the 'Witness' has been doing. A few concrete facts as to the nature of its work are worth mentioning. Its news columns, covering an immense variety of subjects, set all things fairly before its readers. Its editorial columns are notable for their fairness and calmness of reasoning, and for an unusual literary ability. On one point alone, perhaps, has it maintained an attitude of absolute and unbroken antagonism. It is utterly opposed to the existence of the liquor traffic in all its forms. In politics it has shown an inclination to advance the cause of the Reform or Liberal party, but evil in that party has found in no quarter, stronger condemnation than it has found at the hands of the 'Witness.'

The 'Journal' joins in the wish that the 'Witness' and Mr. Dougall may be long spared in their field of conspicuous usefulness.

OUR NEW SERIAL STORY.

A host of Editors, College Principals, Ministers of all denominations, Judges, agriculturists and business men are meting out to the 'Witness' unstinted praise, alike for its news and for its patriotic attitude on all questions of national import. Will not the foregoing help you to decide what paper you will take for the ensuing year?

A splendid serial story is to start in the 'Witness' almost immediately. Those who subscribe at once will make sure of not missing the first chapters. The 'Witness' has many departments devoted to the Home, the young people, the farm, veterinary, poultry, and garden, Legal, medical, chess, dress, kitchen, etc., etc., all edited by experts.

The 'Weekly Witness,' and 'Canadian Homestead' .. .. $1.00 a year
The 'Daily Witness' is .. .. $3.00 a year.

Take a hint from the above, and try the 'Witness' this year. You will certainly like it.

OUR BEST CLUB.

'Northern Messenger' and
The 'Weekly Witness' and 'Canadian Homestead.

The above papers are sent to one address every week for only $1.20. Try them for a year.

Those who receive the 'Northern Messenger' through their Sunday School may have the benefit of this reduced rate by remitting eighty cents and the forty cent coupon herewith making $1.20 in all for the above papers.

JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Publishers,
'Witness' Building, Montreal.

THIS COUPON IS WORTH FORTY CENTS

As I get the 'Northern Messenger' through our Sunday school I am entitled to enjoy the benefit of the attached club of $1.20. I, therefore, enclose this coupon and eighty cents to secure the 'Weekly Witness' and Canadian Homestead' for one year and so complete my club.

NAME .. ..
ADDRESS .. ..
POST OFFICE .. ..

A FEW MOST EXCELLENT PREMIUMS

To Stimulate Activity in Greatly Extending Our Circulation.

After examining a large number of articles, we selected the following as being the most attractive and desirable Premiums that could possibly be offered. They are all such as will add to the attractiveness of the home; some by way of usefulness and beauty, others by way of joy and merriment. For instance, the game 'Din,' and our Stereoscope will be like 'bundles of joy' and 'loads of fun.' If any one member of a family got to work at once, these premiums might be easily earned one after another. How much more quickly if several members of the family started out. And the friends who subscribed for any of the 'Witness' publications, would have full value—and might be invited to enjoy the game and stereoscope, too. Other premiums will be announced next week.

New Subscribers.

When new subscribers are stipulated it means absolutely bona fide new subscribers. That is, people in whose homes the paper subscribed for has not been taken within the past two years, or whose name appears in our subscription list of two years ago. We only need to make this matter plain to have it faithfully carried out by our canvassers.

Renewals.

In all of the following offers two renewal subscriptions will be accepted instead of one new one, and one subscription to the 'Weekly Witness,' or 'World Wide,' will count as two for the 'Northern Messenger.' One reason is that renewals are not difficult to get, but the chief reason is that renewal subscriptions are our main support, and therefore we have to depend upon them.

Those working for the following premiums must, of course, send full rates for each subscription—and must mark NEW or RENEWAL opposite each.

"DIN."

Very Funny.

This is the very latest and the funniest game yet devised. It consists of eighty cards representing the animals and fowls found in a barnyard.

The unique feature of the game is the mirth created by the various players in their attempts to imitate the cries of the different animals. The result is a side-splitting din. Just the game for these long winter evenings.

Full directions for playing sent with each game.

Any subscriber can have this great game of DIN free of charge who send $1.60 for four subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger,' three of which must be new.

A Trip Around the World

BY MEANS OF

Laughable, Interesting and Beautiful Colored Views.

from all parts of the world. This trip will be enjoyed by young and old, and can be taken at small expense.

By an arrangement with the manufacturers, we are able to purchase this handsome Outfit at a price that permits us to make our readers a very liberal premium proposition. This Outfit consists of the following:

ONE STEREOSCOPE, with aluminum hood, and bound with dark, rich, red velvet. The frame is of fine finished cherry, with sliding bar holding the views, and with a patent folding handle.

COLORED VIEWS, made by a special process, a combination of lithographing and half-tone work, handsomely colored in natural effects. The objects in the pictures are shown in relief—not flat like an ordinary picture—and are so natural that you imagine you are right on the scene looking at them in reality. You will take as much pleasure in showing these views to others as you do in admiring them yourself.

HERE ARE THE TWO BEST PREMIUM PROPOSITIONS WE HAVE EVER MADE.

OUTFIT NO. 1.—Consists of one best Stereoscope and 24 colored views, and will be given to those sending us $4.00 for ten subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger,' six of which must be absolutely new subscribers. For every subscription short of required number add 25c each.

OUTFIT NO. 2.—Consists of fifty views, and our best Stereoscope will be given for fifteen subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at 40c each, eight of which must be new.

These Stereoscopes must not be supposed to be the cheapest kind usually peddled in the country. The cheap kind was offered us also, but we knew our subscribers would appreciate the best. The difference in price is chiefly due to the superior lense used.

We mail to any address in Canada or United States post paid.

CHILDREN OF THE BIBLE SERIES.

(By J. H. WILLARD.)

handsomely bound. These Bible Stories cannot fail to stimulate in young people a desire for a further knowledge of the Scriptures.

The language is within the comprehension of youthful readers. Each story is complete by itself. The books will make attractive holiday gifts.

For three or more absolutely new subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at 40c each, one may select one of the following books, of the books will all be sent to the remitter of the club, if so directed.

'The Boy Who Obeyed'—The Story of Isaac.
'The Farmer'—The Story of Jacob.
'The Favorite Son'—The Story of Joseph.
'The Adopted Son'—The Story of Moses.
'The Boy General'—The Story of Joshua.
'The Boy at School'—The Story of Samuel.
'The Shepherd Boy'—The Story of David.
'The Boy Who Would be King' — The Story of Absalom.
'The Captive Boy'—The Story of Daniel.
'The Boy Jesus.'

REVERSIBLE SMYRNA RUG.

Size 2½ x 5 feet.

These Handsome Smyrna Rugs are made of the best wool dyed in fast colors and reversible, being same on both sides. They are of the popular size, 2½ x 5 feet, and are made up in Oriental Medallion and Floral Patterns. Great taste and harmony characterize the coloring. Having made a contract with the manufacturer to supply us with these Rugs at a very low price we are able to offer them on very reasonable terms. Though this Rug would be cheap at four dollars in any of the city carpet stores, we will give it away to any subscriber sending fourteen absolutely new subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at 40c each. For every subscription short of the required number add 25c cash. That is, if the club raiser can only get ten at 40c, he will have to send one dollar extra.

The express charges will be collected of the receiver of the Rug by the Express Company, which can be ascertained as the weight being under eight pounds.

Each new subscriber will receive in addition a copy of our '1905 in Caricature,' being a selection of about a hundred and fifty of the best cartoons on the most important events of the year.

ONE-PIECE LACE CURTAIN

With Lambrequin Throwover.

This is the very latest thing in Lace Curtains and is a decided novelty, having a Lambrequin Throwover, the entire Curtain being woven in one piece. This Curtain is strongly made, having overlock edges, while the design is of a neat and dainty floral pattern.

This unique Curtain fits one window, being 4 yards long and 60 inches wide, divided down the centre. It will at once appeal to the housewife whose attempt at artistic arrangement has often proved an unsatisfactory and trying task. Simply throw the Lambrequin top over the pole facing it outward, drape back the sides and it is complete.

One pair of these Lambrequin Curtains will be given for a club of five absolutely new subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at 40c each, post paid, to any address in Canada or the United States.

THE SWEET STORY OF OLD.

A LIFE OF CHRIST FOR CHILDREN.

This CHILD'S LIFE OF CHRIST, by Mr. Haskell, with an introduction by the Ven. Archdeacon Farrar, D.D., for children, and its many beautiful illustrations, makes a very attractive volume. The experience of many mothers has proved that even from earliest years, the heart of childhood is capable of being moved by the 'Sweet Story of Old.'

This book has 31 illustrations, six in colors, by artists who realize that the picture is as important as the printed page, and have made this part of the book an important feature. The book measures 5½x7½ inches, and is printed from large, clear type, on an extra good quality of paper. The cover is in cloth, beautifully decorated in gold and colors, with title on the side and back, making a very attractive looking book.

We will give a copy of this beautiful book, post paid, for only three subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at 40c each.

NOTTINGHAM LACE BED SET.

Consisting of Three Pieces.

THIS VERY HANDSOME BEDROOM SET consists of one Lace Bed Spread, size 72 by 84 inches, and one pair of Lace Pillow Shams, each 34 by 34 inches. This Set is a reproduction from a real Nottingham design, overlook edges, with ribbon effect, and Fleur de Lys centre.

READ OUR VERY LIBERAL PROPOSITION.

The complete Set, consisting of Bed Spread and Two Pillow Shams, will be sent post paid, for only Ten New Yearly Subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger, at 40c each.